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DOCUMENTS.

This installment finishes the series of fine old Hudson Bay Company documents, furnished by Mrs. Eva Emery Dye, from the collection of materials she made in the preparation of her book "McDonald of Oregon."

The Oregon Missionaries.

Archibald McDonald, in this long and interesting letter, informs his correspondent on many points, among which are the facts that three settlements of American missionaries had been made. He refers, of course, to the Lees in the Willamette Valley, Whitman at Wailatpui and Spalding at Lapwai.

Colville, 25th Jan'y, 1837.

My dear Sir,

I have great pleasure in acknowledging receipt of your very kind letter of this very date last year, & was happy to learn that you and yours were then in the enjoyment of all the blessings this visionary world can afford: If I on my part take up the pen this early in the season, tis not to say that this is the latest date you will hear from us. No friend but as I am situated some preliminary steps are necessary to make the winding up of my correspondence more shure and convenient [obliterated] 20th. April, when the more important and pressing affairs of the concern must be attended to. I am not assisted with the scrape of a pen by clerks as heretofore was the case, indeed I may almost say there is not a man in the district that can sign his own name for Ermatinger with the exception of a couple of weeks middle of December I never see; his sojourn being constantly in the F. Head camp & the Kootenais business is in charge of Big Charles & Antoine Felix—old Rivet is the summer master & Deputy Gov'r of Colville—so you all cannot say that our bill of expense for clerks here is extravagant. I must own however that the bill of wages nevertheless is heavy—we have 28 Men and Boys and the most of them being old hands or otherwise useful their wages amount high. The Trade also is on a more liberal scale than in our early days in the Columbia, especially in the upper country both with Indians & Freemen in consequence of the number of new adventures now pouring in upon us from the American side of the mountains. Our profits however continued between 3 and 4 thousand. The farm

at present is on an extensive scale. What think you this winter upwards of 5000 Bushels of Grain?—namely—3000 of wheat, 1000 of corn and more than 1200 of other grain. Your 3 calves are up to 55 & your 3 Grunters would have swarmed the country if we did not make it a point to keep them down to 150. With all this and its concomitant comforts, I need not say that we live well—last season to complete our independence I had a handy man from the sea and in three months got us up a new mill & new stores the best between Cape Disappointment & Fort Coulonge. With your two friends of old Ogden & Black I made the trip to the sea last summer accompanied by Cowie who discontinued here the intended voyage out. There we found the usual bustle not at all diminished by the presence of a new transport ship from England and a very superb steam vessel intended for the coast. In this *Skokum* Ship as the Chinooks call her the *Isle a la Crosse Gents* & myself were treated with a delightful cruise round the mouth of the Willamette before her final departure for the coast with Finlayson, who superintended her first essay in those seas. By last account she reached her destination safe & proved well adapted for the project in view. She was to have returned by Johnsons Straits inside Vancouvers Island & winter in Puget's Sound—but of the happy performance off this trip I have not yet heard. Three other vessels are also employed in that trade and the occasional trips to California & the Islands. Work & Dr. Kennedy are at new Fort Simpson substituted for Nass. Manson & [illegible] Kipling (your Lac La Loche staff) at Fort McLoughlin—Yale at Langley and Kittson at Nusqually in Puget Sound—this is the coast distribution & you cannot say there supernumeraries. Birney again is at Ft. George Laframboise has the Umqua Dept. Payette the Lower Snake District & Tom the Upper—your friend John McLeod is a sort of a go between the three last places, who I dare say will be writing for himself. Black & Pambrun are at their old places; so that if you should be at a loss to know where the deuce the superabundance of gentl'n are, if there be any, look for them at Vancouver. Ogden, besides Squire Fisher, has seven clerks with him at the 7 Posts namely—McLane—Lane—McBrane—Fraser—Anderson—McKinley & McIntosh.—So far I am more particular with *you* in these matters than I will be with any of my other Indian country correspondents as I take it for granted you dont every day see a Columbia Herald. Your frequent visits now however to Montreal & Lachine might perhaps have saved me the task of going so minutely into our legal news.

On politics I could also dilate a little too, but as I have just observed, the frequency of your visits to the great folk about Lachine must put you in possession of everything interesting on that head. Our betters seem to have a wonderful attachment to service—not one of them will budge—rather make the tour of Italy & Holy Land upon the advantageous terms of *full pay* than either retire or return to the country. I see the honest

man your father-in-law is a length promoted and I believe has already resigned, at least he himself wrote me so much last fall. I do not know when or how all our expectant clerks are to be provided for, but they seem exceedingly important at present. The last affair into which we were all lugged was to entail upon us advantages that I cannot for the soul of me forsee—the general profits are annually decreasing and will continue to decrease—happy those who have their fortunes already made—but enough on this gloomy subject. I hope you continue to hear pleasing accounts of the Boys. My wife is anxious to know what family you and Charlotte have now. Flora must now be an age to demand the untying of your purse strings. We have as yet but an only girl who with our boy is all the family we have here—the other chaps are at R R—three with Mr. Jones and one with the grandfather. By the by I have the pleasure to correct you in the information you had from Mr. McKay at Lachine. Earl Selkirk is not dead—at least end of last April he was at White Hall in America alive and active after returning from New Orleans—he is again about returning thro the Southern States, and this summer tis not at all improbable we shall see him from the head of the Missouri across upon a tour to the Columbia—what think you of that—I am aware of the passage in the papers that misled Mr. McKay. The traversing of the continent in that direction is now becoming more safe & familiar to our ear every day. I have now St. Louis cows & horses at Colville—two or three American clergymen with their families & household goods came across last season & are now settled, the one in the Willamette and another in the Blue Mountains of Walla Walla and a third at the Clear water forks of the Nez Perces. We also have an Episcopalean Minister of our own at headquarters—so you must own “the march of intellect” is making great progress in our part of the wilderness. It is now almost an age since we saw one another—so much so indeed that you seem to forget the exact place. My memory is better—it was the Forks of Spokane & not Okanagan. this recollection brings on other melancholy reflections—poor Dease is no more and the fate of poor Douglas still more appalling in the Sandwich Islands—they were both our companions in the last parting glass. I have a very long and interesting letter from Edw’d Ermatinger at St. Thomas in U. Canada. He is well and in the way of succeeding well. His brother joined me here middle of last month—left us 9th. inst. with 14 men & 2 Boats for below; since that time I am informed of his detention by ice above Okanagan, & must await the grand breaking up of the River as the frost continues to increase in severity. They cannot suffer much, as their cargo is flour, corn & pease & the neighbourhood still affords Rocons if not Macons. The most of his men are York people whom I detained here in the fall until the flour was ground. This hanh of provisions—apuhmus, cord & parplok is intended for Walla, Walla and a large party that is to be fitted up from there in the spring under I

believe the direction of Mr. John McLeod. We must now absolutely make a bold stand on the frontiers. Though not a lucrative business its prosecution will have its advantages. We are satisfied from good information that the Americans attempting that trade make nothing out of it. Indeed the Equippers at St. Louis sent up an agent last summer to secure from the leaders of the Trappers all they could before their couriers *du Bois* were declared insolvents while the outfits continue from St. Louis—and a strong influential party has a direct interest in keeping the trade in that channel—we shall always be able to compete with them, but the moment an entrepot is formed by American subjects near the mouth of the Columbia good bye to our advantages.

April 3d Two days ago Ermatinger sent me a Budget from Spokane after his return from below—a vast deal of domestic news, and upon the whole nothing amiss all the way from Ft. Simpson to Umqua. Finlayson safely landed from the steamér in Puget Sound last fall. I expect him here in a few days on his way out also Douglas and Fisher, but Black it would appear wont budge from Kamloops. McLean got as far as Cape Disappointment on a Monterey voyage but being 45 days wind bound there was recalled & was succeeded by Birnie—he is now about Walla Walla arranging affairs for the Snake Expedition. We have had a very severe winter here—would you believe that the horses which left us with the F Head outfit the 21st of last month are not yet at Spokane. It will be some days yet before we can turn out our ploughs. Ermatinger took upwards of six weeks going down the Columbia even by leaving his lading at Okanagan. I am anxious to close my private correspondence as a very disagreeable task is just imposed on me by Order of Council to collect evidence & make out affidavits from our men here in the case of that unhappy man Heron.—Mean-time

I am
My dear Sir,
Very sincerely & truly yours

(Signed) ARCH'D McDONALD.

Yankee Competition.

John Work writes to Edward Ermatinger at St. Thomas, Upper Canada, telling the news of Fort Simpson. Among other things he mentions the competition from Yankee fur traders and hopes it will cease.

Fort Simpson N. W. Coast.
15th Feby. 1837.

My dear Ned

On the 31st December last I had the pleasure of receiving your very kind and highly valued favour of the 11th Feby. last